



# Planning Department

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Sherry Dong  
Chairwoman, City of Boston Board of Appeal

FROM: Joanne Marques  
Regulatory Planning & Zoning

DATE: August 20, 2025

RE: Planning Department Recommendations

Please find attached, for your information, Planning Department recommendations for the August 26, 2025 Board of Appeal's Hearing.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.



<b>Case</b>	BOA1706519
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-04-07
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	1 to 3 Center PZ Boston 02114
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0302715000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Government Center/Markets Pemberton Square Protection Area
<b>Zoning Article</b>	45
<b>Project Description</b>	Change occupancy from beauty salon to body art.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	Use: Conditional (Body Art)

#### **Planning Context:**

This project is located within the Center Plaza building in downtown Boston, across from Boston City Hall. The project proposes changing occupancy from a beauty salon to a body art establishment. The Center Plaza building is an eight-story commercial building with many different commercial spaces for rent. Existing tenants include beauty salons and barber shops, restaurants, and office spaces. Given the multi-use nature of the building and a change from beauty salon to a similar use of body art, this is an appropriate use for the site.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

Section 45-14 states that body art establishments are a conditional use, and therefore must be granted a conditional use permit by the Board of Appeal. The existing use of beauty shop is an allowed use.

In granting conditional use for body art, the Board of Appeal must find that the conditions in Article 6 are met; the proposed use will not ostensibly adversely affect the neighborhood, will not present a hazard to vehicles or pedestrians, will not create a nuisance, has the appropriate facilities to operate the use, and is in an appropriate location. Given the existing use of a service establishment (beauty shop) and the active commercial nature of this area, body art is an appropriate use here. This also presents a case for zoning reform, where some land uses with similar impacts have different land use allowances.



Plans reviewed are titled "Tenant Fit-Up for Sola Salon Studios", prepared by James Gilmour Architecture, and dated June 28, 2023.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1706519, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1714041
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-04-23
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	633 to 633A Tremont ST Roxbury 02118
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0400476000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	South End Neighborhood MFR/LS
<b>Zoning Article</b>	64
<b>Project Description</b>	The proponent proposes redeveloping the existing office and commercial space to a beauty salon on the first floor with necessary electrical and mechanical rooms and a staff break room on the basement level.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Forbidden Use

**Planning Context:**

The proposed project is a completely internal renovation that will have no effect on the physical urban landscape of the South End. The South End Neighborhood is home to a vibrant and diverse selection of active commercial uses including restaurants, retail shops, barber shops and beauty salons, typically with housing on the upper levels.

Article 64-7 establishes that this project is located within the Multi-Family Residential/Local Services (MFR/LS) subdistrict. The MFR/LS subdistrict was established to encourage the development of housing and ground floor commercial uses. This aligns with the current reality of the South End.

The plan, Imagine Boston 2030 outlines contextually sensitive development, encouraging small business growth, and providing ground floor amenities as strategies for enhancing Boston's neighborhoods. Internal alteration projects that expand use possibilities and preserve historic facades align with the city's neighborhood enhancement strategies.

This project adds vibrancy to the neighborhood by filling a currently vacant office space and converting it to an active use. The housing on the second floor of this building is unaffected by



the proposed project. The project fits the surrounding context of the neighborhood by adding a local service without compromising the physical character or available housing in the area.

**Zoning Analysis:**

According to Article 64 Table A, barbershops and beauty salons are allowed on the ground floor or basement floor. According to the Refusal Letter, the proposed project will relocate the office use to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, thus triggering the forbidden use sited. The planning department recommends this project for approval.

Plans reviewed are titled "Her Hair Salon", prepared by JCBT Architect, and dated 2/07/2025.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1714041, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1731934
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-06-09
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	67 Appleton ST Boston 02116
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0500944000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	South End Neighborhood MFR
<b>Zoning Article</b>	64
<b>Project Description</b>	Add takeout restaurant use to provide a soft-serve ice cream takeout window to an existing candy store.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	Conditional Use Required

**Planning Context:**

The proposed project would be adding a soft serve ice cream window on the side of an existing candy shop. The only change of the building would be changing an existing window panel to an operable window to sell ice cream. The business is fully on the ground floor of an existing rowhouse. The surrounding context is made up of similar brick rowhouses with various retail, restaurant or businesses on the ground floor of many.

**Zoning Analysis:**

The proposal requires conditional use permits for a take out restaurant use and a walk up take out window use. The proposed does not create new zoning violations or worsen any existing violations. The new use will meet the conditions of Section 6-3 with minimal impact to the surrounding context while also retaining and growing an existing local business.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1731934, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1732098
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-06-10
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	218 to 220 Old Colony AV South Boston 02127
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0700423000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	South Boston M-1
<b>Zoning Article</b>	8
<b>Project Description</b>	Proposed change of use for ground floor commercial space - from retail establishment to pilates studio. Work to include the installation of two bathrooms.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Forbidden Use (Fitness Center)

**Planning Context:**

The proposed project sits along a high-density, mixed-use stretch of Old Colony Avenue in South Boston. While the area was historically home to predominantly manufacturing and industrial uses, recent development projects have brought an influx of residential and commercial uses to the corridor. This shift in context was largely spurred by the adoption of PLAN: Dorchester Avenue (adopted in 2016), which envisioned the corridor transforming into a "new, mixed-use 21st century district" with "significant housing opportunities" and "active ground floor retail and service uses."

As part of the in-progress 218-220 Old Colony Avenue small-project development, the proposed project is closely related to this planning context. The five-story development (which was approved in March 2020 and broke ground in October 2022) will bring 40,000+ square feet of residential dwelling units (32) and roughly 2,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space to its previously low-density industrial site.

Originally approved with a ground floor retail use, the development now seeks zoning relief to accommodate a change of occupancy to a pilates studio. This scope aligns with PLAN: Dorchester Avenue's stated planning goals for the east side of Old Colony Avenue, which encourage the proliferation of certain ground floor commercial uses, including "smaller scale



retail and professional offices," as well as "fitness centers and other neighborhood commercial amenities."

**Zoning Analysis:**

Fitness centers and gyms (of which pilates studios are considered by zoning) are not land uses specifically mentioned in the property's use tables (Table B of Article 8, which relate to Boston's "base code" zoning). Accordingly, they are categorized as forbidden in the districts in which those tables are applicable.

Despite their absence from the area's use regulations, fitness centers and gyms are land uses that are both: (1) already existing in the surrounding area (2-3 block radius), and (2) specifically noted as contextually appropriate for the area in the recently adopted PLAN: Dorchester Avenue (2016). Because of this context, the Planning Department recommends approval for the proposed project.

Future zoning reform in the area (and to base code zoning), should seek to better align use regulations for base code districts with: (1) current land use trends in the area; and (2) the structure of the Planning Department's recently implemented updates to other use tables within the Code.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1732098, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning





<b>Case</b>	BOA1725220
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-27
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	24 Edge Hill ST Jamaica Plain 02130
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1001934000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Jamaica Plain Neighborhood 1F-3000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	55
<b>Project Description</b>	The project will add two shed dormers to an existing 2.5-story structure to create a 3-story structure.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Front Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Parking or Loading Insufficient

#### **Planning Context:**

The existing structure is a 2.5-story, single-unit residential structure. It is located in an area with many similar residential structures, many of which are 2.5 to 3 stories tall. Most properties are built to the street with small rear yards. Similar to the subject lot, most lots have narrow driveways or walkways on one side that divide the space between neighboring properties. The project proposes to add shed dormers to an existing finished attic to expand the amount of usable floor area. This type of renovation is also an example of the kinds of renovations and changes the Planning Department seeks to streamline via the Neighborhood Housing Zoning initiative, announced in November 2024, where the goal is the eventual citywide allowance of maintenance and upgrades to existing structures without the need for zoning relief via variances.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

The required Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for the property is 0.6. The existing FAR is 0.7 and the proposed is 0.83. The subject lot is much smaller than many surrounding lots which leads to a greater proportional increase in the FAR despite the fact that the increase in floor area is very



small. There are several examples of other properties in the area with higher FAR on similar sized lots.

The project is cited for front, side, and rear yard violations. Because the dormers stretch the length of the structure, they register within all of the yard violations and therefore constitute an extension of an existing non-conformity for all sides. The narrowest yard in this case is on the north side where the project will not decrease the side yard beyond the existing 4.4 feet. As with the other sides of the property, the project will maintain adequate light and air for the subject and neighboring properties while allowing the owner to increase the amount of living space within the unit. This demonstrates a case for zoning reform as the owner should not be required to seek zoning relief for a minor change to the structure that is consistent with the scale of the surrounding area and which preserves the existing structure.

The project is also cited for inadequate parking. As with many surrounding properties, there is a paved area on one side which may be used as parking or as a walkway to the rear of the property, however, no parking is shown on the plans. The Code states that a single unit residence is required to have a minimum of one parking space. The project is a minor upgrade to an existing residence and therefore a variance should be granted with respect to off-street parking.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1725220, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1720605
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-13
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	13 Marmion ST Jamaica Plain 02130
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1102091000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Jamaica Plain Neighborhood 3F-4000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	55
<b>Project Description</b>	Renovate an existing 2.5-story structure, adding a rear addition and shed dormers, to create a 3-story, three bedroom residential structure. The project will also rebuild the front porch and fully finish the rear porch.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Height Excessive (stories) Front Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient

### Planning Context:

The property is located in Jamaica Plain within the PLAN: JP/Rox plan area. The proposed single unit residential structure is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood at three stories tall. It is also closely spaced next to the neighboring properties to both sides which is consistent with the other 2.5- and 3-story structures in the neighborhood.

The project will turn an existing attic into living space with the new dormers, build a second story addition in the rear of the structure, rebuild the front porch while reducing its size, and rebuild and fully finish the rear porch.

PLAN: JP/Rox promotes the production of housing with a mix of unit sizes and seeks to enable home renovations. The project will add an additional bedroom to create a three-bedroom unit that largely maintains the character and scale of the original structure. This type of renovation is also an example of the kinds of renovations and changes the Planning Department seeks to streamline via the new Neighborhood Housing Zoning initiative, announced in November 2024,



where the goal is the eventual citywide allowance of maintenance and upgrades to existing structures without the need for zoning relief via variances.

### **Zoning Analysis:**

The project is flagged for excessive floor area ratio (FAR), excessive building height, and front, side, and rear yard violations.

The required FAR in the district is 0.7. The existing structure has an FAR of 0.56 and the proposed FAR is 0.83. The block primarily consists of 2.5- and 3-story buildings, many of which surpass the 0.7 or 0.8 FAR maximum which depends on structure type. This suggests that the proposed FAR is consistent with the neighborhood's established character, and thus presents a case for zoning reform.

The project is also cited for excessive height. The maximum height is three stories. The project proposes a three story building. No violation is found for excessive height.

The project is also cited for insufficient front, rear, and side yards. The code requires a front yard of 15 feet and the existing front yard is 8.8 feet. The project proposes to rebuild the front porch, reducing its width within the front yard which will result in a decrease in extent of the non-conformity.

The code requires a rear yard of 20 feet and the primary structure is 14.9 feet from the rear property line at the nearest point. The rear porch will be rebuilt but the depth of the rear yard will not change. There is also an existing shed within the required rear yard. No change to the shed is proposed.

The code requires a side yard of at least seven feet while maintaining at least ten feet between primary structures on neighboring properties. The existing structure is within three feet of the northern property line and maintains a 2.4 foot side yard at the narrowest point. The project will not decrease this distance, but the proposed dormer and rear addition will be an extension of this non-conformity. The addition helps to achieve the goals of PLAN: JP/Rox and the Neighborhood Housing Initiative while maintaining side yards consistent with area and maintaining adequate light and air between neighboring properties.

### **Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1720605, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

**CITY of BOSTON**

Reviewed,

*Kathleen Onuf*

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1684116
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-01-15
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-21
<b>Address</b>	51 Moseley ST Dorchester 02125
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1303384000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Dorchester Neighborhood 3F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	65
<b>Project Description</b>	Legalize an already constructed residential basement extension built within the CFROD overlay.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient CFROD Applicability

#### **Planning Context:**

The proposed project would legalize an existing basement extension of a previously constructed building. There are no external dimensional changes and no change in occupancy. This project aligns well with both the neighborhood character and city planning goals. By expanding the already existing unit, it can allow a family to continue to live in place without having to leave the community and neighborhood.

The project is also located within the Coastal Flood Resiliency Overlay district, but not subject to its requirements. While the Planning Department does not support the creation of new living area below the Sea Level Rise Design Flood Elevation within the CFROD, to help ensure the safety of new residential space, this space is already existing.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

There are five violations that are triggered by the project. The front, rear, and side setbacks are all too shallow for what zoning allows for. However, the building is already constructed, and there will be no dimensional changes made to these setbacks.



The next violation is in regard to open space, but again, there are no dimensional changes or occupancy changes for the building. This is a preexisting non-conformity that will not be extended by this proposed change.

The final violation is in regards to FAR. The zoning allows for an FAR of 0.5 while the proposed project has an FAR of 1.2. The FAR is the only dimension that changes for the project, as making the basement occupiable will count towards the FAR, unlike an unfinished storage area. However, there is no occupancy change and no external dimensional changes that are being made to the property. This points to the appropriate fit of this addition within the neighborhood context.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1684116, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1717047
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-02
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	132 Sycamore ST Roslindale 02131
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1903567000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roslindale Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	67
<b>Project Description</b>	Construct a new single-family dwelling on a currently vacant lot. Dwelling will consist of 3100 sq ft of living area with one detached garage.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Lot Width Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient

**Planning Context:**

This recommendation relates to one of two applications tied to a proposed project upon the project site, 132-134 Sycamore St. The project seeks to erect a single family dwelling unit in each of the two adjacent vacant lots on the project site. This scope of work is divided into two separate permit applications (BOA1717047 for 132 Sycamore St and BOA1717054 for 134 Sycamore St), each of which will require its own recommendation. This recommendation relates to the 132 Sycamore St portion of the project.

132 Sycamore St is a vacant lot in a residential area of the Roslindale neighborhood. It is less than a ten minute walk away from Roslindale Square as well as the Roslindale Village MBTA Commuter Rail Station. One- and two-unit homes are the dominant residential typology.

The homes and lots along this street generally share a similar character and size to the subject property. The proposed project keeps with the established character of the neighborhood and is not expected to negatively impact the surrounding community.

**Zoning Analysis:**

This proposal has triggered three zoning violations: lot width insufficient, lot frontage insufficient, and side yard insufficient.





The proposed project's lot area and frontage violations are existing conditions, not proposed to be worsened through the project. The lot width and frontage minimums are 50' for a one-family detached dwelling unit in a 2F-5000 subdistrict but the proposed lot width and frontage are 40'. 132 Sycamore is one of four contiguous lots on the same block that have 40' lot width and frontage. Directly across the street, there are four more contiguous lots with 40' lot width and frontage. Future zoning reform for the area should look to either re-calibrate lot width and frontage requirements to better align with the area's existing context. Relief is recommended.

The proposed project's insufficient side yard is 10' to the left and 5.9' to the right, whereas the required side yard is 10' on both sides. Many parcels within a one to two block radius share similar side yard dimensions. This represents a case for zoning reform and relief is recommended.

The proposed project must also undergo design review as per Article 67-28.1(a): "Any Proposed Project, if visible from a public street or public open space, that proposes the erection of a new Building or the addition or expansion of an existing Building or Structure by more than seven hundred fifty (750) square feet or more of Gross Floor Area." The design review should focus on the site plan, with particular attention to minimizing impervious surfaces and evaluating the placement of both the garage and primary structure on the site.

Plans reviewed are titled "Plan of Proposed Construction 132 Sycamore Street Boston, Massachusetts (West Roxbury District)" prepared by Greater Boston Surveying and Engineering, and dated January 28, 2025."

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1717047, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review.

Reviewed,

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1717051
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-02
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	132R Sycamore ST Roslindale 02131
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1903567000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roslindale Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	67
<b>Project Description</b>	Proponent to construct a new, detached garage in the rear yard of the newly-constructed single-family dwelling. This project is in conjunction with ERT 1694433 132 Sycamore St.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

#### **Planning Context:**

This recommendation relates to one of two applications tied to a proposed project upon the project site, 132R-134R Sycamore St. The project seeks to erect a detached garage in each of the two adjacent vacant lots on the project site. This scope of work is divided into two separate permit applications (BOA1717051 for 132 Sycamore St and BOA1717056 for 134 Sycamore St), each of which will require its own recommendation. This recommendation relates to the 132R Sycamore St portion of the project.

The proposed detached garage would be constructed on what is currently a vacant lot in the Roslindale neighborhood. Detached garages within a two block radius are not common, but appear in modest numbers. 112 Sycamore, a few houses down the same block, features a detached garage as do 62 and 72 Cummins Highway around the corner of the same block. The new garage will be designed to match the predominant style in the area, featuring a gable roof and wood panels similar to those featured in surrounding residential facades. This design will ensure that the garage is in character with the other garages and homes in the neighborhood. In addition, this new garage is located tucked in the rear of the building and will not feature prominently on the streetscape, minimizing impact on the pedestrian experience.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**



This proposal has triggered two zoning violations: side yard insufficient and rear yard insufficient.

Article 67, Section 33.7 states: "Accessory Buildings may be erected in a Side or Rear Yard; provided that no such Accessory Building is more than fifteen (15) feet in height, or closer than four (4) feet to any side or rear Lot line, or nearer than sixty-five (65) feet to the front Lot line."

Plans show that the garage is 7.9 feet from the southwest side line and an even greater, unquantified distance from the northwest side line. Plans additionally show that the garage is 30 feet from the rear yard line and approximately 120 feet from the front lot line. The height is proposed to be 14 feet and 2 1/4 inches. Therefore, the garage meets all dimensional regulation requirements and the rear and side yard violations were incorrectly triggered.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1717051, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1717054
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-02
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	134 Sycamore ST Roslindale 02131
<b>Parcel ID</b>	19-03566000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roslindale Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	67
<b>Project Description</b>	Construct a new single-family dwelling on a currently vacant lot. Dwelling will consist of 3100 sq ft of living area with one detached garage.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Side Yard Insufficient Lot Width Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient

**Planning Context:**

This recommendation relates to one of two applications tied to a proposed project upon the project site, 132-134 Sycamore St. The project seeks to erect a single family dwelling unit in each of the two adjacent vacant lots on the project site. This scope of work is divided into two separate permit applications (BOA1717047 for 132 Sycamore St and BOA1717054 for 134 Sycamore St), each of which will require its own recommendation. This recommendation relates to the 134 Sycamore St portion of the project.

134 Sycamore St is a vacant lot in a medium residential zoning subdistrict in the Roslindale neighborhood. It is less than a ten minute walk away from Roslindale Square as well as the Roslindale Village MBTA Commuter Rail Station. One and two-family homes are the dominant residential typology. The homes along this street generally share a similar character and size to the subject property. The proposed project keeps with the established character of the neighborhood and is not expected to negatively impact the surrounding community.

**Zoning Analysis:**

This proposal has triggered three zoning violations: lot width insufficient, lot frontage insufficient, and side yard insufficient.



The proposed project's lot area and frontage violations are existing conditions, not proposed to be worsened through the project. The lot width and frontage minimums are 50' for a one-family detached dwelling unit in a 2F-5000 subdistrict but the proposed lot width and frontage are 40'. 132 Sycamore is one of four contiguous lots on the same block that have 40' lot width and frontage. Directly across the street, there are four more contiguous lots with 40' lot width and frontage. Future zoning reform for the area should look to either re-calibrate lot width and frontage requirements to better align with the area's existing context. Relief is recommended.

The proposed project's insufficient side yard setback is 10' to the northwest side line and 5.9' to the southwest side line, whereas the required setback is 10' for both side yards. Many parcels within a 1-2 block radius share similar side yard dimensions. This represents a case for zoning reform and relief is recommended.

The proposed project must also undergo design review as per Article 67-28.1(a): "Any Proposed Project, if visible from a public street or public open space, that proposes the erection of a new Building or the addition or expansion of an existing Building or Structure by more than seven hundred fifty (750) square feet or more of Gross Floor Area." The design review should focus on the site plan, with particular attention to minimizing impervious surfaces and evaluating the placement of both the garage and primary structure on the site.

Plans reviewed are titled "Plan of Proposed Construction 134 Sycamore Street Boston, Massachusetts (West Roxbury District)" prepared by Greater Boston Surveying and Engineering, and dated January 28, 2025."

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1717054, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen O'Neil".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1717056
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-02
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	134R Sycamore ST Roslindale 02131
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1903566000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roslindale Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	67
<b>Project Description</b>	Proponent to construct a new, detached garage in the rear yard of the newly constructed single-family dwelling. This project is in conjunction with ERT 1694437 134 Sycamore St.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

#### **Planning Context:**

This recommendation relates to one of two applications tied to a proposed project upon the project site, 132R-134R Sycamore St. The project seeks to erect a detached garage in each of the two adjacent vacant lots on the project site. This scope of work is divided into two separate permit applications (BOA1717051 for 132 Sycamore St and BOA1717056 for 134 Sycamore St), each of which will require its own recommendation. This recommendation relates to the 134R Sycamore St portion of the project.

The proposed detached garage would be constructed on what is currently a vacant lot in the Roslindale neighborhood. Detached garages within a two block radius are not common, but appear in modest numbers. 112 Sycamore, a few houses down the same block, features a detached garage as do 62 and 72 Cummins Highway around the corner of the same block. The new garage will be designed to match the predominant style in the area, featuring a gable roof and wood panels similar to those featured in surrounding residential facades. This design will ensure that the garage is in character with the other garages and homes in the neighborhood. In addition, this new garage is located tucked in the rear of the building and will not feature prominently on the streetscape, minimizing impact on the pedestrian experience.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**



This proposal has triggered two zoning violations: side yard insufficient and rear yard insufficient.

Article 67, Section 33.7 states: "Accessory Buildings may be erected in a Side or Rear Yard; provided that no such Accessory Building is more than fifteen (15) feet in height, or closer than four (4) feet to any side or rear Lot line, or nearer than sixty-five (65) feet to the front Lot line."

Plans show that the garage is 7.9 feet from the northwest side line and an even greater, unquantified distance from the southwest side line. Plans additionally show that the garage is 30 feet from the rear yard line. The height is proposed to be 14 feet and 2 1/4 inches. Therefore, the garage meets all dimensional regulation requirements and the rear and side yard violations were incorrectly triggered.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1717056, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1719009
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-08
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	77 Blake ST Mattapan 02136
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1803896000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Hyde Park Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	69
<b>Project Description</b>	Construct a new two-unit, two and a half-story house. In connection to ALT1695850.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Lot Area Insufficient Lot Width Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient FAR Excessive Usable Open Space Insufficient Front Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

**Planning Context:**

This project is in a residential area with primarily two- to two and a half-story, one- to three-unit buildings. Building floor plates in the area vary, but most buildings fall between 700 and 1,200 sq ft. This means that the proposed building is in line with the most buildings in the area in terms of massing and unit count.

**Zoning Analysis:**

The lot does not comply with the required lot area, lot width, or lot frontage for the allowed use of a two-unit dwelling in this district. However, the size and shape of the lot is in line with surrounding properties in this district. This indicates that the zoning may need to be updated to better align with existing conditions and make the development of small-scale infill projects feasible.

The proposed FAR also does not comply with the maximum allowed FAR of 0.5. However, the proposed building massing (in terms of floor plate and height) is in line with the existing conditions in the area (as the floor plate is just under 1000 sq ft and the height is 2.5 stories).





The project does not comply with the required side yard of 10 ft. The smallest point of the side yard is where the lot transfer is proposed on ALT1695850. The side yard is 5.3 ft here. The space between the two buildings is 8.6 ft. This is not excessively close and provides room for light and air.

The project does not comply with the required front yard. The required front yard is the Existing Building Alignment, which is approximately 6 feet. The proposed Front Yard is 7.8 ft for the main massing of the building, with a cover two-story porch which further encroaches into the yard and is 3.4 ft from the front lot line. However, the project cannot be set back further because of the existing curb cut. Additionally, the proposed porch which encroaches into the required front yard increases the amount of usable outdoor space for residents, which is limited for this project.

The project does not meet the usable open space requirement of 1,750 sf per dwelling unit, or 3,500 sq ft total. The proposed usable open space is approximately 419 sq ft per dwelling unit. This usable open space consists mostly of the relatively narrow areas on the sides of the building, and there is therefore little high-quality usable open space. The majority of the lot is used for parking and the driveway, which does not count for usable open space. Although the four parking spaces are required to meet the zoning requirement, the Planning Department would support a variance for less parking in order to increase the usable open space. Additionally, parking should be set back from the street line, as parking is forbidden in front yards, and parking must be screened about buffered in accordance with Section 69-27.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1719009, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that parking is limited parking in order to increase usable open space and that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review with attention to setting the parking back from the street line and adding screening and buffering for the parking area.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen O'Neil".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1719016
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-08
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	79 Blake ST Mattapan 02136
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1803897000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Hyde Park Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	69
<b>Project Description</b>	Transferring part of the abutting lot in order to create a side yard for an existing building. Also adding two parking spaces in the rear. In connection to ERT1695842.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Lot Area Insufficient Lot Width Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

#### **Planning Context:**

The proposal is to transfer a 79 sq ft section of the lot 77 Blake St is to the lot 79 Blake St. 77 Blake St is an empty lot (where a new building is proposed on application ERT1695842) and 79 Blake St contains an existing one-unit building. There is a bump out on the existing building and this lot transfer creates a 3.3 ft side yard for the existing building.

The majority of lots in the area are rectangular with frontages of 40 ft, with a few irregularly shaped lots or lots with smaller or larger dimensions. The narrowest nearby lots are 38.36 ft.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

The proposed lot does not comply with the zoning requirements for lot area, lot width, or lot frontage. However, the proposal allows the existing building to be maintained and allows the lots to have the 40 ft frontages that are typical in this area. It also creates a typical 40 ft lot width for the majority of the lot.

The project is also flagged for insufficient usable open space. The amount of required usable open space is not clear because the proposed occupancy is not clear. The project description (as well as the assessing data) lists the existing building as one unit. However, the plans list it



as two units. If this project includes a proposed change of occupancy from one to two units, the amount of required open space increases from 1,750 sq ft to 3,500 sq ft. It appears that, if the project is proposing a change of occupancy to two units, it does not comply with the usable open space requirement. However, the project has over 2,000 sq ft over usable open space and therefore comes close to the requirement for two units. In addition, there are large spaces of consecutive open space (such as the 256 sq ft deck and 600 sq ft space behind the proposed parking spaces), making the spaces highly usable.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1719016, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1721885
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-16
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	494 to 496 Poplar ST Roslindale 02131
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1805982000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roslindale Neighborhood 1F-6000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	67
<b>Project Description</b>	The project will add an additional residential unit to an existing two-unit, 2.5-story building by adding three new dormers and finishing the existing attic.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Height Excessive (stories) Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient Parking or Loading Insufficient Use: Forbidden

### Planning Context:

The existing residential structure is a 2.5-story, two-unit residential structure on a corner lot in a residential area in Roslindale. Similar to other structures along Poplar Street, the structure is closely spaced with neighboring properties and has less open space than nearby lots on side streets.

While the lot is not within walking distance to a MBTA train station, the MBTA Number 50 Bus does run on Poplar Street with service to the MBTA Forest Hills Orange Line Station to the north and MBTA Hyde Park Commuter Rail Station to the South. Off-street parking in this area is limited, especially for lots along Poplar Street; on-street parking appears to be more common. The property is also one block from Elena B. Rose Memorial Playground and is also approximately one mile from Stony Brook Park.

### Zoning Analysis:

The project is cited for seven violations, many of which are dimensional requirements. The project proposes adding dormers on two sides of the 2.5-story structure to create an additional



residential unit in the attic. This has triggered violations for excessive floor area ratio (FAR), building height, and insufficient side yard. The required FAR is 0.5 and the existing is 0.49. The project will increase the FAR to 0.67 which is higher than many single unit structures on larger lots in the area, but also lower than many other properties within the zoning district. The addition of the dormers will also increase the structure from 2.5 stories to 3 stories, even though the total building height will not change in feet. The maximum height in stories for the district is 2.5 stories. There are several examples of three-story structures in the district, including the property across Glenclyff Street. The new dormers are also an extension of the existing non-conforming side yard which is 5.5 feet in depth at the narrowest point. The project will not decrease the depth of the side yard and maintain adequate light and air between the side of the structure and the neighboring property.

The addition of a residential unit on the property has also triggered violations for forbidden use, off-street parking, and usable open space. The zoning subdistrict does not allow residential structures with more than one unit even though there are many examples of two- and three-unit structures in the district. For off-street parking, many neighboring properties have zero to two off-street parking spaces and there is abundant street parking on side streets in the area. The plans do not show any parking; however, visual inspection of the property suggests that there is one parking space on the property. The subdistrict requires 1,800 square feet of usable open space for each residential unit, meaning 5,400 square feet of open space would be required for a three-unit structure. Surrounding properties have far less than 1,800 square feet of open space per unit. The existing context of the surrounding area does not comply with requirements for residential unit counts, off-street parking, and open space suggests that all three of these requirements present cases for zoning reform.

The project is also cited for insufficient rear yard; a rear yard of at least 40 feet is required. The existing rear yard is 41.1 feet deep and no change is proposed. The rear yard complies as proposed, no violation is found.

Plans reviewed: "Rodriguez Family Residence" prepared by "Laura Moss Architect" dated 05/06/2024 and "Plan of Land 494 Poplar Street" prepared by "Neponset Valley Survey Assoc., Inc." dated 2/27/2025.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1721885, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

**CITY of BOSTON**

Reviewed,

*Kathleen Onuf*

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1465030
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2023-04-24
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	4 Leroy ST Dorchester 02122
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1500671000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Dorchester Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	65
<b>Project Description</b>	Extend living space into the basement.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance, Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Reconstruction/Extension of Nonconforming Bldg.: 3F in a 2F zone Number of Habitable Stories Exceeded

#### **Planning Context:**

The proposed project makes no exterior alterations to the structure. Living space is extended into the basement to add storage space, a new exercise studio, laundry room, and computer room. This proposed project is not located in the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District, nor the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area. The proposed project places auxiliary living space in the basement, where the ceiling height is six inches below that required by Building Code. As the uses do not constitute primary living space such as bedrooms, this is an appropriate use of this existing space.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

This project contains three cited zoning violations, including extension of a non-conforming building, excessive FAR, and an exceeded number of habitable stories. The FAR violation is a result of the extension of living space into a previously unfinished basement. As the proposed project contains no exterior changes that would put the structure out of context with the neighborhood, relief is recommended for this violation, based on the planning context detailed above. The same recommendation follows for the number of habitable stories violation. As this extension of living space has no impact on the exterior of the building, the neighborhood context is not affected by these changes. Such changes only improve the quality and living space of existing housing stock.



The extension of a non-conforming building to continue use of a three-unit building in a two-unit subdistrict persists from the existing condition in which this was an approved use. Relief is recommended from all zoning violations if building code relief is appropriate based on Design Review of the proposed alterations.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1465030, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Inspectional Services Department showing compliance with the requisite 7'-6" minimum basement ceiling height required by Building Code.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning





<b>Case</b>	BOA1692050
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-02-14
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	14 Meehan ST Jamaica Plain 02130
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1102794010
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Local Industrial
<b>Zoning Article</b>	55
<b>Project Description</b>	The project will renovate an existing three-story structure to create two new residential units.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Parking or Loading Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient FAR Excessive Front Yard Insufficient

#### **Planning Context:**

The subject lot is located on Meehan Street, a side street off of Washington Street in Jamaica Plain near The English High School. Located half a mile from both the Forest Hills and Green Street MBTA Orange Line Stations, the surrounding area is seeing an increase in residential, transit-oriented development that historically was a mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial.

The lot is in the PLAN: JP/Rox Plan Area which seeks to promote the development of “balanced growth that is anchored by public transportation” and to respect the physical scale of the neighborhood. The project convert an existing structure to two units within walking distance of two MBTA stations. This is an example of a type of project the Plan seeks to support.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

The project is cited for insufficient lot area and insufficient front yard, both of which do not have minimum requirements in the zoning subdistrict. The lot area is 4,648 square feet and the front yard is eleven feet deep, measured from the edge of a Boston Water & Sewer Commission right-of-way between the existing structure and the street. No violations are found for insufficient lot area and insufficient front yard.



The project is also cited for insufficient required open space and excessive floor area ratio (FAR). The project complies with the requirements for the subdistrict with more than 50 square feet of open space per unit and an FAR of 0.85, below the required FAR of 1.0.

The project is also cited for insufficient off-street parking. The subdistrict requires one parking space per residential unit and two parking spaces are proposed. The Planning Department supports the request for a variance on this requirement given the lots proximity to the Forest Hills and Green Street MBTA Train Stations and Washington Street, which is served by several MBTA bus routes.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1692050, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1677984
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2024-12-12
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	781 Dorchester AV Dorchester 02125
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0703186000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Dorchester Neighborhood 3F-D-3000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	65
<b>Project Description</b>	Build a new 3.5-story 2-unit residential building to share a lot with an existing residence.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Height Excessive (ft) Height Excessive (stories) Side Yard Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient Additional Lot Area Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient Two or More Dwellings on Same Lot

### Planning Context:

The proposed project at 781 Dorchester Avenue would construct a new 3-story, 2-unit residential building with an included roof deck. This section of Dorchester Ave is located at the northern end of Dorchester, just past the intersection of Columbia Road, which connects to the interstate highway above JFK/UMass Red Line MBTA Station. This area is defined by dense residential development, with mixed-use commercial being predominant along Dorchester Ave itself. The proposed project site is in an area defined by a 0-foot modal street wall with small side setbacks, which creates a dense core from which the neighborhood spreads out.

The proposed project is well supported by public transit through bus lines on Dorchester Ave and its proximity to the JFK MBTA Red Line and Commuter Rail Station. The project is in line with neighboring developments, working to match the triple-decker style that is predominant in the area. While the project is triggering zoning violations, it is similar in scale and density to neighboring developments. The violations are largely triggered due to the unique parcel shape of the proposed project, as it fits well within planning contexts.

### Zoning Analysis:



The proposed project triggers eight distinct zoning violations. The first of these is “two or more dwellings on the same lot,” which is triggered due to the already existing building on the project parcel. However, this is a uniquely shaped lot that is over twice as large as its neighbors. The proposed project would be similar in lot density to its neighbors. It would not be noticeable as out of place from the pedestrian view on the street.

The next violation is in regards to yard requirements. The zoning calls for a 5-foot yard for each side yard, while the proposed project has side yards of 5 feet and 3.3 feet. While this is under the minimum allowed side yard, this is in line with neighborhood character. Smaller alleys are common between buildings, with many sharing party walls between them. This requirement does not reflect the built environment of the neighborhood and points to the potential need for zoning reform. If the project were to be built with the required side yards, it would appear out of character in relation to its neighbors.

The next set of violations regards lot area. The zoning code requires a lot size of 3000 square feet for this type of structure. The proposed project is on a lot of 5675 SF, which is above the minimum. However, as this is the second building on the lot, the total square footage divided by two does not get you the 300 square feet required by the code.

In addition, the project is also triggering a violation for needed additional square footage per additional unit over three units. As this project is adding two units to a parcel with 3 units, it would require a lot size of 9000 SF. However, this is not reflective of the built reality of the neighborhood. As it currently exists, this part of the parcel creates a noticeable gap in the well-defined street wall for the area. The addition of this structure will create a parcel that is more in line with its neighbors, compensating for its large size in comparison. In addition, the location of the building on an already constructed lot allows for a combined drive lane for both developments, which condenses the parking for both projects into one path.

The next violation is insufficient usable open space. The zoning calls for a minimum of 300 SF per dwelling unit. The project is proposing 110 feet of open space per unit. While below the minimums, this is in line with neighborhood design. Open space on property is exceedingly rare, with most lots either being fully paved or with an insubstantial rear yard. This project is offering open space in line with this character. The project is located near the pocket park “Sharon’s Park” as well as a half mile from Moakley Park with its recreational spaces.



The project is also triggering violations for both height in stories and feet. The proposed project is 3.5 stories and 43 feet tall. The proposed project is 3.5 stories and 43 feet. While the building is technically 3.5 stories, its form reads as only 3 stories. The half-story is due to the rear unit situated behind the roof deck, which is not visible from the street and does not impact the pedestrian experience. It shares a similar design with other nearby buildings in both style and height, and would not appear out of proportion. The project is also a foot lower than its neighbor, helping to contribute to the stepdown in density as one approaches the highway.

The final violation is in regards to excessive Floor Area Ratio. The proposed project allows for an FAR of 1.3, where the proposed project would contribute to an FAR of 1.59. This is due to the location of a second building on the same parcel. They are both contributing to the same FAR while being distinct buildings. The large size of this lot makes the density of the proposal fit in context. The buildings will read as two distinct buildings that will appear as if on separate parcels to the average pedestrian. The density is in line with neighborhood character, as the current space between existing buildings is a noticeable gap in the built tooth of the neighborhood.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1677984, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1724519
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-23
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	275 Gold ST South Boston 02127
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0700888000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	South Boston Neighborhood MFR
<b>Zoning Article</b>	68
<b>Project Description</b>	Demolish an existing one-unit detached home and construct a new one-unit detached home with a semi-finished basement, two-car garage, and family room at street level. The upper floors will include an open living area and bedrooms. A roof deck with a roof hatch and an NFPA 13R sprinkler system are also proposed.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance, Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	Roof Structure Restrictions Existing Building Alignment FAR Excessive Height Excessive (ft) Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient

**Planning Context:**

The proposed project sits in an established residential subdistrict within the Saint Vincent area of South Boston. It also lies within a Restricted Parking and Restricted Roof Structure Overlay Districts. The project's surroundings consist of a mix of two- to four-story structures with single-family to multi-family residential land uses. Bus stops for the MBTA's 9, 10, and 11 routes as well as two Bluebikes stations are accessible to the site within a quarter-mile walk.

The project site is a small, narrow lot (1,389 square feet of area, 24' wide) currently occupied by an existing two-and-a-half-story, single-unit residential structure. It does not feature any existing off-street parking. The proposed project seeks to demolish the existing structure and erect a new four-story, single-family residential structure in its place. The project proposal also includes an integrated two-car garage at the ground floor (accessed via a new sixteen foot wide curb cut) as well as an occupiable roof deck (accessed via a new roof hatch). The project's proposed building height and lot coverage are comparable in scale to the several recently constructed



structures on the block, including those neighboring the property. This project scope is in alignment with the City's planning goals of increasing housing stock and flexibility for growing living arrangements, as detailed in Housing a Changing City, Boston 2030 (September 2018). Gold St is a narrow street with no on-street parking; accordingly, the Planning Department can support the creation of off-street parking because there is no on-street parking available. Planning Department Urban Design staff have recommended that the project undergo design review to reduce the width of the curb cut (sixteen feet proposed) to meet the Public Improvements Commission's standard dimensions for residential properties (ten to twelve feet).

### **Zoning Analysis:**

The proposed project's insufficient lot area violation is an existing condition (1,389 square feet existing, 2,000 square feet proposed). The lot was created in 1910 and is contextually scaled to the surrounding area; as few (if any) of the lots on the block meet this minimum lot size threshold. Accordingly, its impacts on the area are negligible.

The project's roof structure and building height citations relate to similar conditions, as the Section 68-29 triggers the need for a conditional use permit where a roof deck extends a nonconforming building height. Despite exceeding the zoning's standards (40' maximum), the proposed building height (45', including roof deck and hatch) is the same as several of the structures surrounding it, including an abutting property. A few of these structures also feature roof decks, some of which are accessed through head houses with larger visual impacts than the project's proposed roof hatch. This context renders the project's height and roof deck appropriate.

The proposed project's FAR (2.0 allowed, 3.0 proposed), side yard (three feet required, one foot proposed), and rear yard (fifteen feet required, seven feet proposed) violations can be largely attributed to the site's small size (24' x 55'). If adhered to on this lot, these setback and density requirements (as currently ascribed) would permit a build scale and footprint roughly 35% smaller than the block's typical built condition. Because the project's proposed dimensional figures match this existing context (typical FAR = 1.75 - 3.0, side yard = zero to one foot, rear yard = zero to twelve feet), they are viewed as appropriate to the area.

The project's existing building alignment violation is incorrectly cited, as the proposed front yard setback (0') matches the block's predominant figure.



To better align the area's rules with its existing context, future zoning reform in the area should look to remove minimum lot area requirements and recalibrate permitted height, density, and setbacks figures.

A proviso for Planning Department design review has been added to this recommendation to reduce the project's proposed curb cut width from sixteen feet (as shown) to twelve feet, so as to match the Public Improvements Commission's maximum allowed figure for residential uses.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1724519, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review to reduce the width of the proposed curb cut from sixteen feet to twelve feet.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning





<b>Case</b>	BOA1733081
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-06-12
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	20 Shawmut ST Boston 02116
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0500126000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Bay Village Neighborhood RH
<b>Zoning Article</b>	63
<b>Project Description</b>	Build a rear addition on an existing one-unit home.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Conditional Use, Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Rear Yard Insufficient GCOD Applicability Townhouse Review

#### **Planning Context:**

The proposed project is a two-story ground up addition to the rear of a townhouse along with a one story addition to the top of the existing three story rear portion of the building. The surrounding neighborhood is made up of townhouses of similar massing. The site is within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) designated with the purpose of promoting the restoration of Boston Groundwater levels and protecting the city's historic neighborhoods. It is also within the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD) which indicates areas that are at risk from flooding under future sea level rise. Lastly it is within the Bay Village Historic District to preserve the landmark conditions of the neighborhood and the work would remain in the rear of the building.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

Presently the proposed project has two dimensional violations and two conditional use requirements. The proposed project is presently exceeding the maximum FAR of 2.0 while being proposed at 3.9. This can be recommended for relief as the project will be in line with the surrounding context with a similar mass. The rear yard requirement is 12 ft, however, the existing townhouse is at 0 ft and the proposed will not worsen this condition but extend it with the addition. This rear yard violation is commonplace in the surrounding context and can be recommended for relief. The rear yard requirement in this district should be reviewed for zoning



reform. The project is cited for GCOD applicability, pursuant to Section 32-4 due to the new proposed addition. Consequently, the project is subject to GCOD review by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission. Article 63 Section 8-4 requires any townhouse extension to require a conditional use permit. The project meets the requirements for Section 6-3 allowing for recommendation of a conditional use permit. In consideration of CFROD, the basement level is below the flood elevation where residential space is not recommended. However the residential space in the basement is an existing use that will slightly be extended in size but not have added use or new additional bedrooms.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1733081, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO that plans be submitted to the Landmarks Commission for review.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1718844
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-07
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	7 Wellington ST Roxbury 02118
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0402537000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	South End Neighborhood MFR
<b>Zoning Article</b>	64
<b>Project Description</b>	Change use from one unit to two units, with a full renovation, groundwater recharge system, one rear deck, new roof with hatch access, and restoration of the front stairway to its historic condition.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance, Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	GCOD Applicability Roof Structure Restrictions FAR Excessive Town House/Row House Extensions into Rear Yard

### Planning Context:

The property is located in the South End Neighborhood District, within a MFR subdistrict made up of medium-density housing such as triple-deckers, townhouses, and rowhouses. The block has a strong historic character, but it also includes a variety of rooftop improvements. Nearby buildings have roof decks showing a well-established pattern of using rooftops for outdoor space. The proposed roof deck fits into this trend, as shown in the line-of-sight plan; it will not add noticeable mass or change the building's profile in a way that impacts the streetscape. Rear balconies are also a common feature along this row of townhouses, including the one next door, making the proposed second-floor balcony consistent with the surrounding context. However, because the property is located within the South End Landmark District, all exterior changes are subject to review and approval by the South End Landmarks Commission.

### Zoning Analysis:

The proposal involves a conversion of the existing single-family dwelling into a two-family residence; to include a full interior and exterior renovation. The scope includes installing a groundwater recharge system, adding a second-floor rear balcony, and constructing a roof deck



accessed via a hatch. While the project increases the property's residential capacity, it still maintains the existing building footprint and overall scale in keeping with the surrounding context. The property is located in the South End Neighborhood District, within a Multifamily Residential (MFR) subdistrict.

Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) applicability: the site is located within the GCOD. The proposed construction triggers compliance with groundwater recharge requirements. The project includes installation of a recharge system, but under Article 32, Section 4, conditional use approval and groundwater recharge measures need to be reviewed by the Boston Groundwater Trust.

Townhouse/rowhouse extensions into the rear yard: The proposed second-floor balcony extends approximately five feet into the rear yard. Under Article 64, Section 9.4, balconies above the first story on townhouse/rowhouse require conditional approval. Similar balconies exist along the same row, including on the immediately adjacent property.

Restricted roof structure regulations: The proposed roof deck will be accessed via a hatch located 3 feet 4 inches from the side roof edge, less than the 5-foot minimum setback required under Article 64, Section 34. While this side abuts the wall and roof of an attached neighboring rowhouse, the reduced setback still requires Board of Appeal review.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) excessive: The proposed gross floor area of 4,337 square feet on a 1,980 square foot lot. The maximum allowable FAR in the MFR subdistrict is 1.0 (1,980 square feet). The proposed FAR is 2.19, is double the current zoning limit.

The proposed project requires three conditional use permits for GCOD compliance, the second-floor balcony, and the roof deck hatch setback and one variance for FAR. Despite these violations, the project maintains a scale and character consistent with the surrounding South End context and aligns with established patterns of rooftop and balcony improvements. Zoning relief is warranted and the proposal underscores the need to revisit dimensional standards to better reflect existing built conditions in Boston's dense multifamily districts.

The plans, entitled Multi-Family Residential, 7 Wellington Street, were prepared by GPH Design, LLC, dated February 6, 2025.

**Recommendation:**



In reference to BOA1718844, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: the plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Boston Water & Sewer Commission due to its location within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) and the Landmarks Commission.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1698820
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-03-13
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	74 to 76 Rowe ST Roslindale 02131
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1903860000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roslindale Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	67
<b>Project Description</b>	Add two dormers and a new bathroom at 74–76 Rowe Street, Roslindale.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Side Yard Insufficient

**Planning Context:**

The proponent seeks to add two dormers and a new bathroom to an existing two-unit dwelling. The surrounding area of Roslindale is primarily made up of single- and two-unit homes from the early 20th century, many with pitched roofs and existing dormers. Rowe Street is a residential street located near the Brooke Charter School and is approximately 0.7 miles from Roslindale Village Station, which is served by the commuter rail and multiple bus routes to Forest Hills Station.

**Zoning Analysis:**

Relief is required for side yard under Article 67, Table C, which sets a 10-foot minimum. The existing house is legally nonconforming, with a side yard of approximately 6'7", less than the required 10 feet. Adding dormers and a new third-floor bathroom increases the height of the side walls within the required side yard. While the dormer location is appropriate, the design as shown in the plans appears to have a roofline error; design review is recommended to confirm the shape of the dormer.

The project's scale and design are consistent with similar roofline on nearby homes. Plans reviewed are titled "Alterations to 74 ROWE STREET", prepared by CONSICE DESIGN GROUP, and dated October 17th, 2023.

**Recommendation:**



In reference to BOA1698820, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review with attention to the alignment of the dormer.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1748759
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-07-15
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	6 Almont ST Mattapan 02126
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1802130000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Greater Mattapan Neighborhood R1
<b>Zoning Article</b>	60
<b>Project Description</b>	Demolish an existing two family house and construct a new four story fourteen unit apartment building.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Height Excessive (ft) Height Excessive (stories) Rear Yard Insufficient Parking or Loading Insufficient Permeable Area of Lot Insufficient Building Lot Coverage Excessive Forbidden Multifamily Use

### Planning Context:

The proposed project is to take down an existing two-unit three-story household to build a new fourteen-unit, four-story residential building. The surrounding context is made up of one to three family, three-story homes on similarly-sized lots. This site and neighboring context are in PLAN: Mattapan, a planning process that was undertaken with the surrounding community's input to protect the current residents while improving the quality of life with a thriving environment. Along with guidelines for development in the neighborhood, new zoning regulations were adopted by the Zoning Commission on February 7, 2024 here for this site in order to preserve the small-scale residential character. The site was zoned to remain a smaller scale residential like the existing two-unit house on site that matches the adjacent homes.

### Zoning Analysis:

The proposed project has numerous zoning violations. The maximum height is 3-stories and 35 ft while the proposed height would be 4-stories and exceed 35 ft at an unclear height that is not accurately represented in the submitted drawings. The proposed project would exceed the maximum building lot coverage of 30% at 52% lot coverage. It is also not clear if the proposed





will meet the required 25% permeable lot area due to the lack of information and a proper site plan. The standard rear yard requirement is 20 ft however Section 60-33 gives leeway for shallow lots like this one allowing the minimum to be 10 ft instead but the proposed rear yard would be insufficient at 8 ft. Lastly the maximum allowed units is two and the proposed would be exceeding that at fourteen units.

The project at the current status does not meet numerous zoning requirements crafted through community process during the recent PLAN: Mattapan initiative. It is recommended that the proponent reconsiders a different project that would be in line with the zoning and vision of this site set forth by PLAN: Mattapan.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1748759, The Planning Department recommends DENIAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1657736
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2024-09-30
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	3 to 11 Bowdoin ST Dorchester 02124
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1700052001
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Dorchester Neighborhood LC
<b>Zoning Article</b>	6
<b>Project Description</b>	Change the use permit to allow for the new owner to continue the takeout use.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	Conditional Use (takeout)

**Planning Context:**

The proposed project would affect a strip of commercial businesses at the intersection of Washington St and Bowdoin Ave in Dorchester. The building currently houses a laundromat, a faith center, and a takeout pizza and ice cream restaurant. The restaurant was granted a conditional use permit in 2006 to allow for takeout. This proviso restricted use to only the petitioner. As the restaurant changes ownership, the proponent desires to maintain the takeout provision, which requires the elimination of that proviso. There are no internal or external changes being made to the property.

**Zoning Analysis:**

A conditional use permit is required to extend this existing takeout use (use item 36A). The prior conditional use was granted with a proviso that limited it to the previous petitioner. This specific site continues to be an appropriate location for a coffee shop with takeout, and no additional hazards to pedestrians and drivers would result from the extension of this existing use (Section 6-3). This project represents an opportunity for zoning reform. In the updated Article 8 use tables, adopted through Squares + Streets zoning, takeout is a component of restaurant uses, simplifying approval processes for proponents.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1657736, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

**CITY of BOSTON**

Reviewed,

*Kathleen Onuf*

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1707353
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-04-08
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	18 Intervale ST Dorchester 02121
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1202733000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roxbury Neighborhood 3F-4000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	Article 50
<b>Project Description</b>	The proponent proposes razing an existing garage to erect a three-unit three-story building, including basement level living area. The current lot has a driveway and garage.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Usable Open Space Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient Lot Width Insufficient Additional Lot Area Insufficient Parking or Loading Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient Existing Building Alignment Side yard setback for narrow lot Rear yard setback for shallow lot

**Planning Context:**

The proposed project site is located in the comprised of mostly 2-, 3-, and 4-plus family residential buildings adjacent to long mixed-use boulevards with higher densities and ground level local services. Intervale Street intersects major bus corridors including: Warren Street, Blue Hill Avenue, and Columbia Road. The street contains a mix of residential buildings that include single-family, two-family, mixed-use multi-family buildings, and commercial buildings that include the Masjid Al-Quran mosque and the Community Gospel Church.

The proponent proposes a project with building height, dwelling unit count, parking, and rear yard that are similar, if not exactly the same as the neighboring lots. However, existing lot conditions and proposed massing create very little room for side yards and overall usable open space conditions that are contextual with neighboring buildings. Side yards and usable open



space are important to ensure adequate light and air between buildings and provide space for yards.

### **Zoning Analysis:**

The proposed design has multiple violations related to lot size and coverage. The design was flagged for Insufficient Lot Area. Residential buildings in this zone require a minimum 4,000 square foot lot area for two or less units. Because the proponent seeks to construct more than two units, an additional 2,000 square feet of lot area is required, totaling a 6,000 square foot minimum required lot area. The area of the lot is 1,800 square feet, which is distinctly smaller than the size of the surrounding lots. The proposal was also flagged for violating the minimum lot width standard which requires 45-foot minimum lot width. The existing lot width is 22.5 feet wide. These are specific site conditions that cannot be adjusted. Additionally, the site has Insufficient Lot Frontage at 22.5 feet where 45-foot minimum frontage is required. The other 2- and 3-unit residences on the street have between 39- and 45-foot frontages. This means that the lot is generally half the width and size of surrounding properties, severely out of context with its surroundings. .

While the vast majority of residential parcels in the City are nonconforming by at least one dimensional regulation, both the size of the proposed building and the lot size would fall out of alignment with the built environment. According to Article 50, narrow lots are narrower than the minimum lot width required for residential lots. Section 50-44.7 details the minimum width required for a side yard on a narrow lot is 5 feet. The proposed side yards are each 3 feet wide. Surrounding residential buildings the size of this project have at least one side yard that is 5 feet minimum and generally one side yard that is at least 10 feet, totalling 16 feet. According to Article 50, Table F, the maximum FAR allowed for lots in 3F-4000 is 0.8. The proposed FAR is 1.8. While the rear yard is contextual, the side yards are more narrow than the side yards for the surrounding two- and three-unit buildings. The proposed design was also flagged for containing insufficient Usable Open Space. Article 50 requires 650 per dwelling unit, and the proposed usable open space is 440 square feet per dwelling unit.

A lot of this size would better serve as an attached dwelling to an existing structure or an unattached dwelling with dimensions similar to that of an accessory unit. The project may also need to be modified to meet building code, accessibility requirements, and design standards.



Plans reviewed are titled "18 Intervale Street", prepared by Civil Environmental Consultants, and dated 7/16/2024

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1707353, The Planning Department recommends DENIAL WITHOUT PREJUDICE. Proponent should consider a project that better incorporates the small size of the lot by reducing the building massing and increasing usable open space to better fit within its context.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1676254
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2024-12-05
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	40 Dudley ST Roxbury 02119
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0903254000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Roxbury Neighborhood 3F-4000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	50
<b>Project Description</b>	The proponent seeks to convert the existing 2-story, 2-unit home into a 3-unit home and add rear decks. Note that the residence spans across three different lots, two of which have a different owner than the third.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Rear Yard Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient Parking or Loading Insufficient

#### **Planning Context:**

Located in a primarily residential neighborhood, the surrounding homes are mainly between two and a half to three stories. The project is served by several nearby parks including the Roxbury Heritage State Park, the Southwest Corridor, and Madison Park Field. The site is a five minute walk to Nubian Station and less than a half mile away from the Orange Line Roxbury Crossing train station. The lots in this neighborhood are very irregularly shaped, and many have limited rear yard setbacks. The proponent seeks to convert the existing 2.5-story, 2-unit home into a 3-unit home and add rear decks. Note that the residence spans across three different lots, two of which have a different owner than the third.

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

The proposed project currently has four zoning code violations. The first violation is for off-street parking. One parking space is required per dwelling unit in the Roxbury Neighborhood District. With three units, three parking spaces would be required for this project. There are two tandem driveways, one on either side of the residence that can accommodate at least 3-4 cars total. While this kind of tandem parking was cited for parking maneuverability, it is consistent with the surrounding context. Additionally, the residence is in a transit rich neighborhood, being walking



distance to both the Roxbury Crossing MBTA Orange Line Station and the Nubian Station with extensive bus service.

The project is also in violation of the minimum lot area which is 6000 square feet for the subdistrict, taking into account the additional proposed unit. That being said, if all three of the lots the proposed project spans across are included, the total lot area would be 11,350 which is well over the area's minimum.

The usable open space requirement for the subdistrict is 650 square feet per dwelling unit. That would require this project to have a minimum of 1,950 square feet of usable open space. Again, if all three parcels shown on plans are included, there is currently a total of 3,400 square feet of usable open space which exceeds the minimum requirement.

The final violation is with regards to the rear yard minimum setback which is 25 feet for the subdistrict. Again, if the third parcel shown on plans is included in the rear setback calculation, this minimum requirement is more than met with a 40 foot setback.

This parcel is also located within the Roxbury Neighborhood Design Overlay District and therefore this project will require design review. This overlay district is designed to preserve the existing scale, pedestrian experience, neighborhood character, and historic building concentrations within the Neighborhood Design Overlay Districts (NDOD).

Plans reviewed: "40 Dudley St -Clyde Nesbit " prepared by "Eric Zachrison Architect" dated 05/23/2024 and "Mortgage Inspection Plan 38-40 Dudley Street" prepared by "George Collins" dated 04/05/20219.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1676254, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review due to location within the Roxbury Neighborhood Design Overlay District.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning





<b>Case</b>	BOA1731956
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-06-09
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	85 Chandler ST Boston 02116
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0501062000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	South End Neighborhood MFR
<b>Zoning Article</b>	64
<b>Project Description</b>	Renovation of existing two-unit building including a new roof deck.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Conditional Use, Variance
<b>Violations</b>	GCOD Applicability Roof Structure Restrictions Flood Hazard District

#### **Planning Context:**

This existing two-unit building sits within the South End Landmark District, approximately 600 feet away from the Back Bay MBTA Orange Line Station. The proposed renovation includes two kitchens, bathrooms, flooring, replacing existing decks, and constructing a new roof deck. The surrounding area includes a consistent building typology of one- to three-unit rowhouse buildings or similar size and scale, the majority of which also include roof decks. Given that this is a renovation of a building to improve the quality of two existing units, and that there are other roofdecks in the immediately surrounding context, the proposed project is appropriate at this site. Additionally, the project will be subject to review by the South End Landmark District Commission (SELDC).

#### **Zoning Analysis:**

The project is cited for GCOD applicability, pursuant to Section 32-4 due to substantial rehabilitation. Consequently, the project is subject to GCOD review by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission.

The project must also receive a conditional use permit for the proposed roof structure. Pursuant to Section 64-34, "An open roof deck may be erected on the main roof of a building with a flat roof or a roof with a slope of less than five degrees, excluding shed dormers, provided that:



- (a) such deck is less than one (1) foot above the highest point of such roof;
- (b) the total height of the building, including such deck, does not exceed the maximum building height allowed by this Article for the location of the building;
- (c) access is by roof hatch or bulkhead no more than thirty (30) inches in height above such deck unless, after public notice and hearing and subject to Sections 6-2, 6-3 and 6-4, the Board of Appeal grants permission for a stairway headhouse; and
- (d) such deck and any appurtenant hand rail, balustrade, hatch; or bulkhead is set back at least five (5) feet from the front and rear roof edge."

For the proposed roof deck, provision (a) is met: the proposed roof deck is 11 inches taller than the highest point of the roof. Provision (b) is also met: the height of the roof deck is 42'-11", and the maximum building height within this MFR subdistrict is 70 feet. It is unclear if provision (c) is met: the proposed roof deck would be accessed by a roof hatch, but there is not sufficient detail to determine the height of the roof hatch. Provision (d) is not met: the proposed roof deck is situated more than five feet from the front roof edge, but only 6" from the rear roof edge.

However, several adjacent roof decks are also within five feet of the rear roof edge.

The refusal letter also states that the project violates the provisions of Section 25-5 "Interpretation of Maps" for Flood Hazard Districts. However, this specific property is not located within the updated FEMA Flood Hazard Area. The project is within the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD), but is not subject to the provisions of Article 25A.

Plans reviewed are titled "Proposed Renovation 85 Chandler Street Boston, Mass", prepared by 1507 Architecture, and dated April 23, 2025.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1731956, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans shall be submitted to the Boston Landmarks Commission for design review, and the plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Boston Water & Sewer Commission due to its location within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD).

Reviewed,



*Planning Department*

**CITY of BOSTON**

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1733648
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-06-13
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	34 to 34A Tremont ST Charlestown 02129
<b>Parcel ID</b>	0202880000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Charlestown Neighborhood 3F-2000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	62
<b>Project Description</b>	Expand living space for an existing three-unit residential building by adding a rear addition, renovating the basement, and adding a headhouse and roof deck.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	FAR Excessive Height Excessive (stories) Height Excessive (ft) Usable Open Space Insufficient

### Planning Context:

The proposed project seeks to renovate and expand the living space for an existing three-unit residential building at 34-34A Tremont Street in Charlestown by constructing a rear addition and renovating the basement. The renovations also include constructing rear decks for each unit as well as a headhouse and roof deck. Unit 1 will become a four bedroom unit while Units 2 and 3 will become two bedroom units.

The existing structure is a three-story rowhouse part of a continuous block of rowhouses along Tremont Street. Although this portion of Tremont Street is zoned as 3F-2000, Tremont Street contains other rowhouses and multi-unit residential buildings, with the Harvard-Kent Elementary School directly abutting the proposed project.

This project would meet the goals of PLAN: Charlestown (September 2023) as it would allow property owners to enhance their spaces to suit their needs. Additionally, PLAN: Charlestown prioritized the creation of larger housing units with 3+ bedrooms while also recognizing the need for smaller units. By creating one four-bedroom unit and two two-bedroom units, this project supports these goals.

### Zoning Analysis:



The refusal letter states four violations: excessive FAR, excessive height in stories and feet, and insufficient usable open space.

Under Article 62, the maximum allowed FAR in a 3F-2000 subdistrict is 2.0. The project is proposing an FAR of 3.8. This increase in FAR is due to the increase in living space through the rear addition and the renovation of the basement. The basement was previously unused and will now be used as living space for Unit 1 and become a four bedroom unit. Relief is warranted due to the increase in living space, which will now be able to accommodate larger units on this lot; additionally, the rear addition still maintains a compliant rear yard

The maximum allowed height is 3 stories or 35 feet. The project is proposing a height of 4 stories or 45 feet. This additional height is due to the creation of the head house and roof deck. There are no changes to the main structure, which will remain at 35 feet or 3 stories. Relief is warranted because the additional height does not create additional living space but will help ensure safe access to the newly proposed roof deck. Section 62-25 notes that a stairway head house is allowed as long as it gets approval from the Board of Appeal.

The minimum required usable open space is 350 square feet per dwelling unit. The project proposes usable open space that ranges from 80 square feet to 460 square feet per dwelling unit, provided primarily by the rear decks for Units 1 and 2 and with the roof deck for Unit 3. Relief is warranted due to the size of the lot as it is roughly 19.87 feet by 66.83 feet. As the proposed project is a rowhouse that extends to the property lines, the building footprint limits the amount of usable open space, especially to accommodate the living space for the proposed larger units. Additionally, the project does not provide parking, instead prioritizing expanded living space for the larger units.

Additionally, because this project is changing its height and building massing, it will require Planning Department Review as it is located within the Charlestown Neighborhood Design Overlay District.

The plans reviewed are titled ZBA REFUSED EPLANS\_34 - 34A TREMONT ST\_ALT1719793 and are dated May 9, 2025. They were prepared by Design Resource Team, LLC.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1733648, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans be submitted to the Planning Department for design review with



attention to visibility of the addition and reducing the height as needed to minimize visibility from the public way.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1695772
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-03-03
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	7 Tip Top ST Brighton 02135
<b>Parcel ID</b>	2203697000
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Allston/Brighton Neighborhood 2F-5000
<b>Zoning Article</b>	51
<b>Project Description</b>	Renovate existing 2-story, 2-unit residential building into 3-story, 4-unit building with a new unit in the basement.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Variance
<b>Violations</b>	Parking or Loading Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient Lot Width Insufficient Lot Frontage Insufficient FAR Excessive Height Excessive (stories) Height Excessive (ft) Front Yard Excessive Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient Use: Forbidden

**Planning Context:**

This case was deferred from the July 8, 2025 ZBA meeting. No new materials have been submitted, thus the recommendation is unchanged.

Tip Top Street is a short, one-block residential street connecting Tremont Street to the north and Washington Street to the south. The topography of the area affects the pedestrian experience and the impacts of the buildings on the street - the street slopes down from Tremont to Washington Street, and the parcels on the west side of the street slope downward from the rear lot line to the front lot line. The site is located on the western side of the street and is currently occupied by a 2-story, 2-family building. Due to the topography of the site, there is a significant grade change between the public sidewalk and the front entrance. In result, 12 steps lead up directly from the sidewalk to the front deck, traversing about 8 feet in height and 8 feet in length. The existing building has a front yard of 10 feet 5 inches, side yards of 5 feet 11 inches on the



southern side (left) and 4 feet 2 inches on the northern side (right), and 19 feet 8 inches rear yard.

The proposed project would renovate the existing building, add a basement unit, and increase the height to add a fourth unit on a new third floor. The front and side yards would remain the same, but the rear yard would reduce to 14 feet, 4 inches due to rear addition.

Adjacent to the north of the site is a 2.5-story, 2-unit residential building on the corner lot and a 2.5-story, 2-unit residential building to the south. There is great variety in the heights of the 14 buildings that line the street ranging from 1-story to 3.5 stories at the corner of Tip Top and Tremont Streets though most are 2.5 stories. The experience of the building height based on the topography of the street and the parcels themselves. The front yards are relatively consistent with a modal setback of approximately 7 to 10 feet, however the grade change between the public sidewalk and the front entrances creates a variable pedestrian experience as some properties have retaining walls and others do not. The rear yards along the same side of the street as the proposed project are also relatively consistent around 18 to 20 feet.

However, the condition of the parcels abutting these rear yards is varied with some landlocked parcels and others that face Tremont and Washington Streets. The rear yard of the proposed project abuts the rear yard of a property that faces Washington Street.

The side yards along the street vary - some parcels have driveways and others do not. The abutting parcels on either side of the proposed project do not have off-street parking or a driveway. The abutting parcel to the south has similar side yards to the proposed project.

Along Tremont Street within 200 feet of the corner of Tip Top Street and Tremont are two new residential projects, including the recently approved 75 Tremont Street, a 5-story building with 75 residential units.

In terms of plans, the Allston-Brighton Community Plan is in progress and will provide recommendations related to zoning and capital investments. The existing conditions analysis for Oak Square identifies the many community amenities in Oak Square and Tip Top Street as a transitional area between the commercial core and low scale residential. Residential infill such as the proposed project would help ease the transition between the commercial core and lower density residential areas, as well as provide new housing units for new families.

The Allston-Brighton Mobility Plan was adopted in 2021 with the main recommendation of using a pilot project to transform Washington Street and Cambridge Street between Oak Square and Union Square into a transit corridor with bus priority lanes and multimodal improvements.

In addition, the BPDA Allston-Brighton Needs Assessment adopted in 2024, meant to inform the forthcoming Community plan, found housing access and affordability remains a top priority.

BOA1695772

2025-08-26

2 Planning Department





The Boston Transportation Department's (BTD) Maximum Parking Ratio Guidelines recommends 0 to 1.0 spaces per unit for rental buildings and 0 to 1.25 spaces for condominium buildings at the location of the proposed project.

The basement unit is partially above grade at the front of the structure as a result of the slope, yet access from the sidewalk requires ascending a set of steps. Based on the materials provided, it is unclear whether accessibility requirements will apply per 521 CMR. Regardless of Building Code requirements, we recommend providing a ramp and accessible route to the basement unit.

Materials reviewed for this recommendation were prepared by SDI Architecture on December 4, 2024 and reviewed by ISD on January 21, 2025.

### **Zoning Analysis:**

Zoning relief is recommended for insufficient lot area, insufficient lot width, insufficient lot frontage, insufficient front yard, and insufficient side yard, as these violations are existing non-conformities that will not be worsened by the project.

The zoning requires 1.75 parking spaces per unit. Currently, the proposed project is non-conforming without any off-street parking spaces. Adding two units will exacerbate this condition. However, given that the proposed project is consistent with BTD's Parking Guidelines, the grade change of the street complicates access, and the need to demolish some of the existing structure to provide off-street parking, zoning relief is recommended.

Similarly, the current FAR of 0.96 is non-conforming and will be worsened by the proposed project, increasing the FAR to 1.76 compared to the zoning maximum of 0.6. The height, yards, and usable open space are more effective tools at shaping the building and its impacts. Given that the FAR is non-conforming and there are other dimensional regulations that more closely regulate massing, zoning relief from FAR is recommended.

The rear yard is also currently non-conforming with the required length of 30 feet and will be worsened by the proposed project reducing from 19 feet, 8 inches to 14 feet, 4 inches.

However, the reduction in the rear yard does not introduce any significant impacts to abutters and allows for the new units to provide family-sized housing with 3 bedrooms and an office.

Given the recent planning focus on housing and creating conditions for new families to locate in the neighborhood, zoning relief is recommended.



The proposed 4-unit residential use exceeds the 1- or 2-unit allowable uses. Given the findings of the Allston-Brighton Needs Assessment, greater housing options is a top priority. Any potential impacts of the higher density use can be mediated by appropriate massing. Each room in the new basement unit has a window - the two bedrooms have full windows enabled by window wells, and the kitchen and office have half-sized windows. Based on further review for consistency with the Building Code, zoning relief is recommended.

Although the basement of the proposed project is almost fully above the grade of the sidewalk, given the slope of the parcel, more than 65% of the basement is below grade. Therefore, based on the Article 2 definition of "ground floor," the basement is below grade, and the proposed project has a height of 3 stories. The proposed height of 3 stories and 36 feet, 9 inches exceeds the maximum zoning height of 2.5 stories and 35 feet. Given the steep grade change of the site, as well as the varied heights in the neighborhood context, zoning relief is recommended.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1695772, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



<b>Case</b>	BOA1725055
<b>ZBA Submitted Date</b>	2025-05-27
<b>ZBA Hearing Date</b>	2025-08-26
<b>Address</b>	571B Washington ST Dorchester 02124
<b>Parcel ID</b>	1700654001
<b>Zoning District &amp; Subdistrict</b>	Dorchester Neighborhood NS
<b>Zoning Article</b>	65
<b>Project Description</b>	Proponent is seeking a change in use from a recreational retail cannabis establishment to a newly-tenanted cannabis establishment that includes marijuana retail, delivery operator, and delivery courier uses. No construction is proposed.
<b>Relief Type</b>	Conditional Use
<b>Violations</b>	Use: Conditional

#### Planning Context:

In November 2019, the Mayor's Office signed an Ordinance Establishing Equitable Regulation of the Cannabis Industry in the City of Boston. The goal of this ordinance is to ensure Boston is a model for how to create a system that fosters racial equity and inclusion in the new cannabis industry and to bring the benefit of this industry to all Boston communities. As part of the ordinance, the Boston Cannabis Board was established. This independent board is charged with reviewing all applicants for a cannabis license. According to the Cannabis Active Licenses data set found at this link: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/licensing-board/boston-cannabis-board> , this operator has not yet been granted a license for the 571B Washington Street building.

This site is an existing recreational cannabis retail along the commercial and area in Codman Square, making it an appropriate location for retail use such as this.

There are no concerns regarding the proposed delivery operation. The site is located along Washington Street, which provides parallel street parking, and it is surrounded by several surface parking lots that can accommodate short-term loading needs. In addition, the area already supports multiple businesses with active delivery operations, such as China Station, McDonalds, and others, demonstrating that the street can safely and effectively handle this type of activity.



**Zoning Analysis:**

Cannabis Establishment is a conditional use in the Dorchester NS sub-district and an existing use on this site.

Plans reviewed are titled "571B Washington Street", prepared by Greater Boston Surveying and Engineering, and dated 7/27/2021.

**Recommendation:**

In reference to BOA1725055, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO that the Boston Cannabis Board grants a license for the operator.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning